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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600
15 September 1966

State Department review
completed

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
FURTHER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION
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15 September 1966

HIGHLIGHTS

The US Marines launched Operation DECK HOUSE IV in Quang Tri Province today to reinforce three other USMC battalions now attempting to prevent a Communist buildup in South Vietnam's northernmost province. With the constituent assembly elections passed, friction between South Vietnam's military leaders appears to be on the rise.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Operation DECK HOUSE IV began today as 1,200 US Marines landed three miles south of the DMZ in an effort to check the Communist buildup in Quang Tri Province (Para. 1). One battalion of the US 25th Infantry Division began Operation LANIKAI today 20 miles southwest of Saigon (Para. 2). Operation NAPA ended in Quang Tin Province (Para. 3). Weekly review of South Vietnam battle statistics (Para. 4).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam: The long-rumored replacement of Deputy Premier Co and IV Corps commander Quang may be nearing actuality (Paras. 1-4). General Cao Van Vien, chief of the Joint General Staff, reportedly was appointed concurrently commander of Vietnamese naval forces today (Para. 5). The convening of the constituent assembly has been postponed one day because of an astrological forecast (Para. 6). Various political statements by Buddhist leaders have been reported in the press, but are so far unconfirmed by official reporting (Paras. 7-8).

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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

US aircraft encountered DRV fighter aircraft on five separate occasions on 14 September. No losses occurred on either side (Para. 2). Photography [redacted] has revealed the southernmost SAM site in the DRV (Paras. 3-4).

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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

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IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: There
is nothing of significance to report.

VI. Other Major Aspects: The North Vietnamese
grain harvest is discussed (Paras. 1-2).

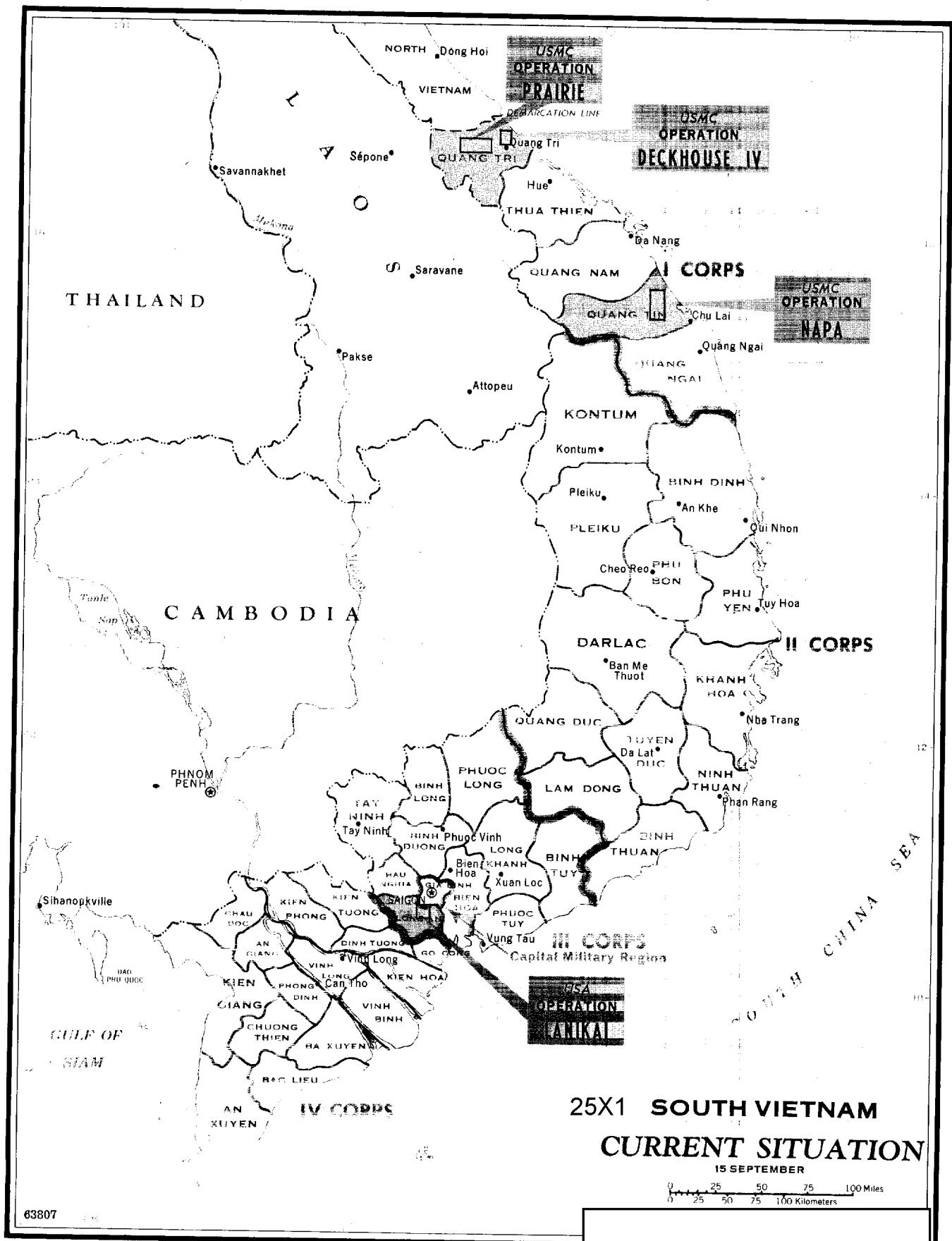
ANNEX:

South Vietnam Battle Statistics
1963 thru week of 4-10 Sept 1966:
-Weapons and Personnel Losses
-Viet Cong Attacks and Incidents

1963 thru 31 August 1966:
-South Vietnamese Desertions
-Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) Returnees

South Vietnamese and Viet Cong
Casualties and Weapons Losses - 1962 to 31 Aug 1966:
-General Statistical Data
-Composite Annual Totals
-Viet Cong Incidents

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. One reinforced US Marine battalion--part of the 7th Fleet Special Landing Force of about 1,200 men--initiated Operation DECK HOUSE IV in northernmost Quang Tri Province on 15 September. This search-and-destroy operation began with sea and air landings of marines along the coast three miles south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The operation is designed to reinforce Operation PRAIRIE, which is being carried out in a wide area along the DMZ by three US Marine battalions with the purpose of preventing a Communist buildup in Quang Tri Province. There have been no reports of contact with enemy forces.

2. One battalion of the US 25th Infantry Division began Operation LANIKAI today. This search-and-destroy operation is being conducted in Long An Province about 20 miles southwest of Saigon. The 2nd Viet Cong Battalion, with an estimated strength of 400 men, is reported to be in the area.

3. Operation NAPA, a one-battalion search-and-destroy operation conducted by US Marines in the coastal flatlands of Quang Tin Province, ended today. Allied casualties are listed at seven killed and 55 wounded. A total of 22 enemy troops were killed, 43 were captured, and an additional 71 enemy suspects were detained.

Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics

4. The week of 4-10 September compared with the week of 28 August - 3 September:

I. Viet Cong Incidents

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>At-tacks</u>	<u>Regimental size</u>	<u>Battalion size</u>
28 Aug- 3 Sep	8	0	0
4-10 Sep	27	0	0

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I. Viet Cong Incidents (Continued)

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Company size</u>	<u>Harassment</u>	<u>Terrorism</u>	
28 Aug- 3 Sep	1	358	20	
4-10 Sep	1	360	32	
<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Sabotage</u>	<u>Propaganda</u>	<u>Anti-Aircraft</u>	<u>Total Incidents</u>
28 Aug- 3 Sep	6	15	110	517
4-10 Sep	21	29	98	567

II. Casualties

	VC/NVA			GVN		
	28 Aug-3 Sep	4-10 Sep		28 Aug-3 Sep	4-10 Sep	
Killed	885		1,166	109		174
Wounded	---		-----	305		488
Missing/Captured	<u>169</u>		<u>218</u>	<u>23</u>		<u>34</u>
TOTALS	1,054		1,384	437		696

	US			FREE WORLD		
	28 Aug-3 Sep	4-10 Sep		28 Aug-3 Sep	4-10 Sep	
Killed	74		71	4		3
Wounded	570		450	15		17
Missing/Captured	<u>10</u>		<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>
TOTALS	654		529	19		20

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III. Weapons Captured

	VC/NVA			GVN		
	28 Aug	-3 Sep	4-10 Sep	28 Aug	-3 Sep	4-10 Sep
Individual	321			51		105
Crew-Served	<u>23</u>		Not Reported	<u>0</u>		<u>4</u>
TOTALS	344			51		109

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The long-rumored replacement of Deputy Premier Co and IV Corps commander Quang may be nearing actuality.

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2. There were coup rumors in Saigon on 9 September.

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whether the coup reports had some valid basis or whether they were spread by Ky's supporters as part of the groundwork for a future move against Co or Quang is not yet clear. In either event, military intrigue is apparently on the rise.

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4. Speculation concerning the removal of Co and Quang was rife in late July and early August.

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Now that the elections are out of the way, Ky may feel that the time is more propitious.

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General Vien Appointed Navy Commander

5. According to the press, the Vietnamese Joint General Staff (JGS) chief, General Cao Van Vien, today was appointed commander of the Vietnamese Navy. The former naval commander, Captain Tran Van Phan, was relieved several weeks ago for incompetence. The government has been having some difficulty finding a qualified successor from within the naval ranks, and the selection of an army officer had been rumored. Vien presumably retains his JGS title.

Opening of Constituent Assembly Postponed One Day

6. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Bui Diem today told a US Embassy officer that the constituent assembly would be convened on 27 September instead of on the 26th as scheduled. According to Diem, the change was made because the astrological forecast is more favorable for the 27th.

Buddhist Activities

7. According to the press, acting Institute chairman Thich Thien Hoa has been making various public statements on his attitude toward the government. Yesterday, press sources quoted Thien Hoa as saying flatly that he was ready to negotiate with the government. Other press reports, however, indicate that Thien Hoa had demanded the release of some 3,000 Buddhist prisoners before a settlement could be reached. Today, apparently in another letter to the government, Thien Hoa repeated his lack of faith in the newly elected constituent assembly and challenged the government to arrest him for antigovernment agitation rather than Buddhists of lesser rank.

8. The press also reported today that aged patriarch Thich Tinh Khiet has ordered Tri Quang to end his fast and to appear tomorrow at the An Quang pagoda, which serves as the temporary headquarters of the Buddhist Institute. At one time, Tri Quang had said that he would obey such an order from Khiet. Neither Thien Hoa's various statements nor Tinh Khiet's order to Tri Quang has been confirmed by official reporting.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

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MIG Encounters on 14 September

2. US Air Force pilots striking targets north-east of Hanoi on 14 September reported five separate encounters with DRV fighter aircraft. No planes were lost by either side in these engagements. US planes last tangled with DRV fighters on 9 September when three MIG-21 Fishbeds attempted to shoot down two F-105s. In the past, DRV fighter activity has alternated between periods of intense action and relative quiet. Yesterday's encounters [redacted]

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[redacted] suggest that another period of aggressiveness on the part of the North Vietnamese Air Force may be in the offing.

New SAM Site in the Southern DRV

3. Preliminary analysis of photography [redacted] indicates the presence of a new North

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Vietnamese SAM site about 55 miles from the DMZ. If confirmed, this site will represent the farthest southward extension of DRV surface-to-air missile defenses. North Vietnam may have decided to move SA-2 equipment into this area to counter the heavy US tactical air activity near the DMZ or to attempt to shoot down a B-52.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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VI. OTHER MAJOR ASPECTS

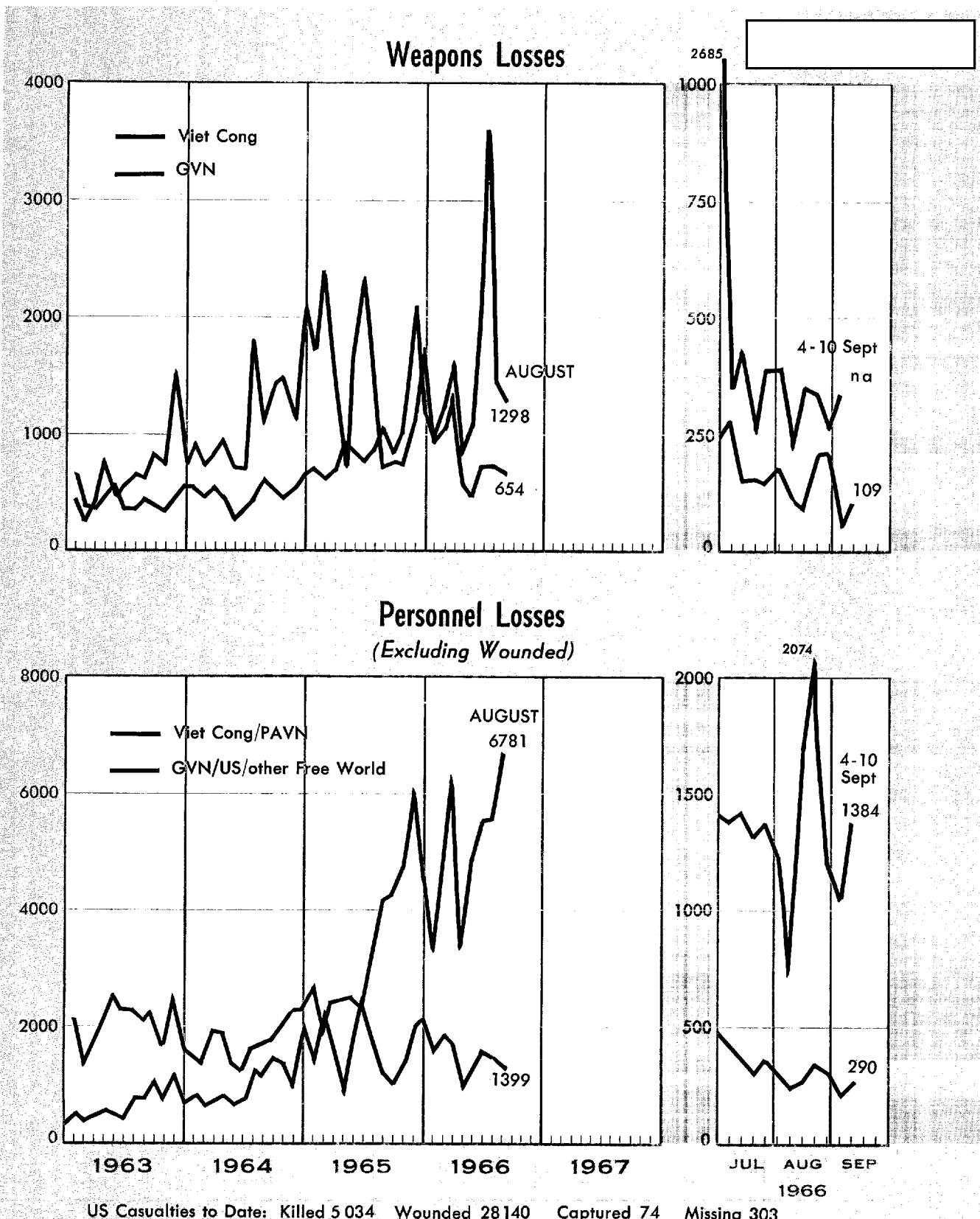
1. Hanoi radio, in a 14 September broadcast, claimed that the DRV's just-harvested early autumn rice crop was the best in the past six years and represented a ten-percent increase over that of 1965. Even if true, the increase reported would amount to only about 30,000 tons and would not materially change the poor prospects for this year's total grain harvest.

2. North Vietnam's early spring rice crop, which normally accounts for about one third of the annual grain harvest, suffered this year from a serious shortfall in the amount of planted acreage because of natural causes and labor disruptions resulting from the war. Moreover, in the likely event that the DRV's most important late rice crop --to be harvested in late October - early November --has only an average yield, present indications are that North Vietnam will gather a smaller grain harvest this year than the average 4.5-million tons of 1965.

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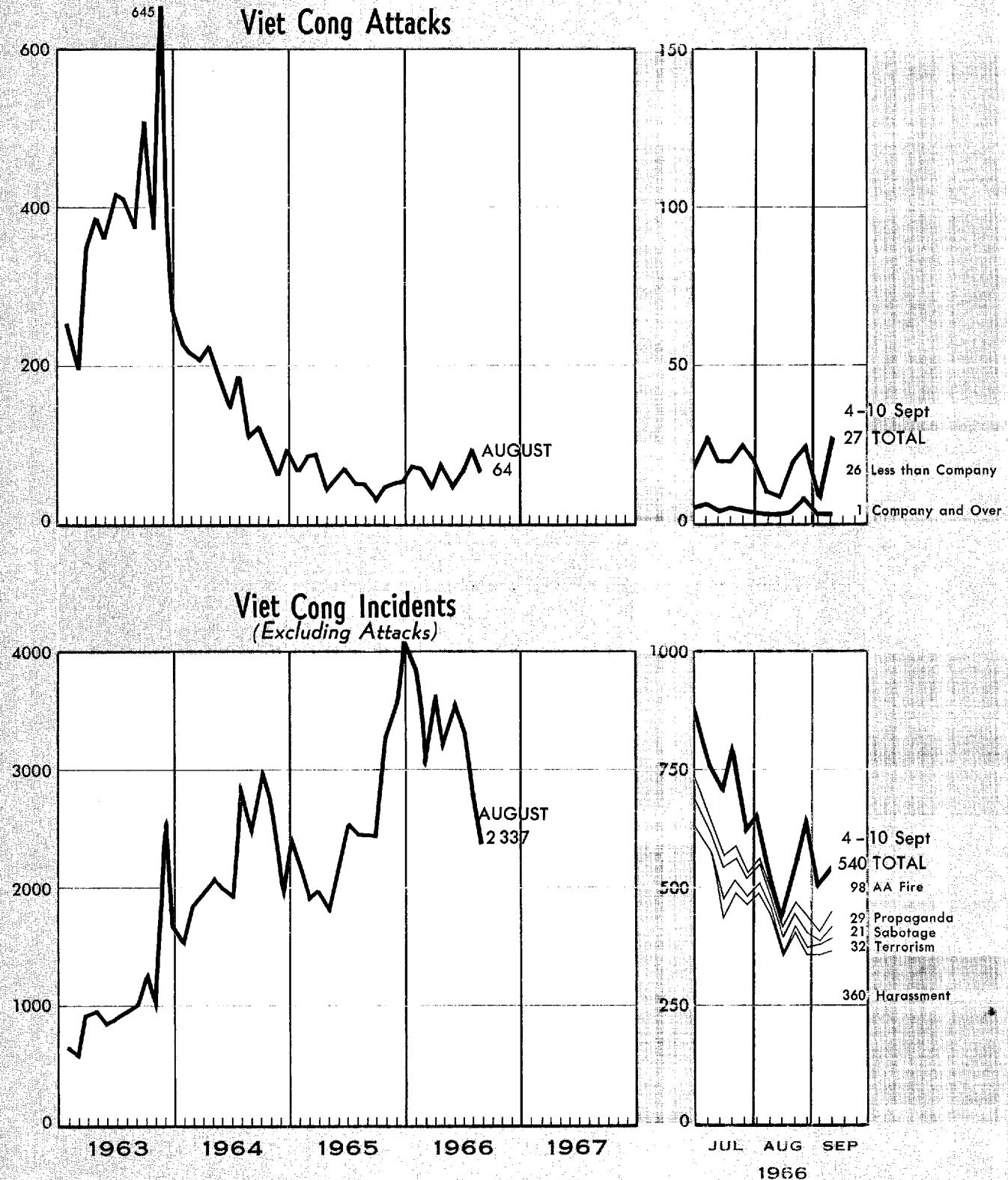
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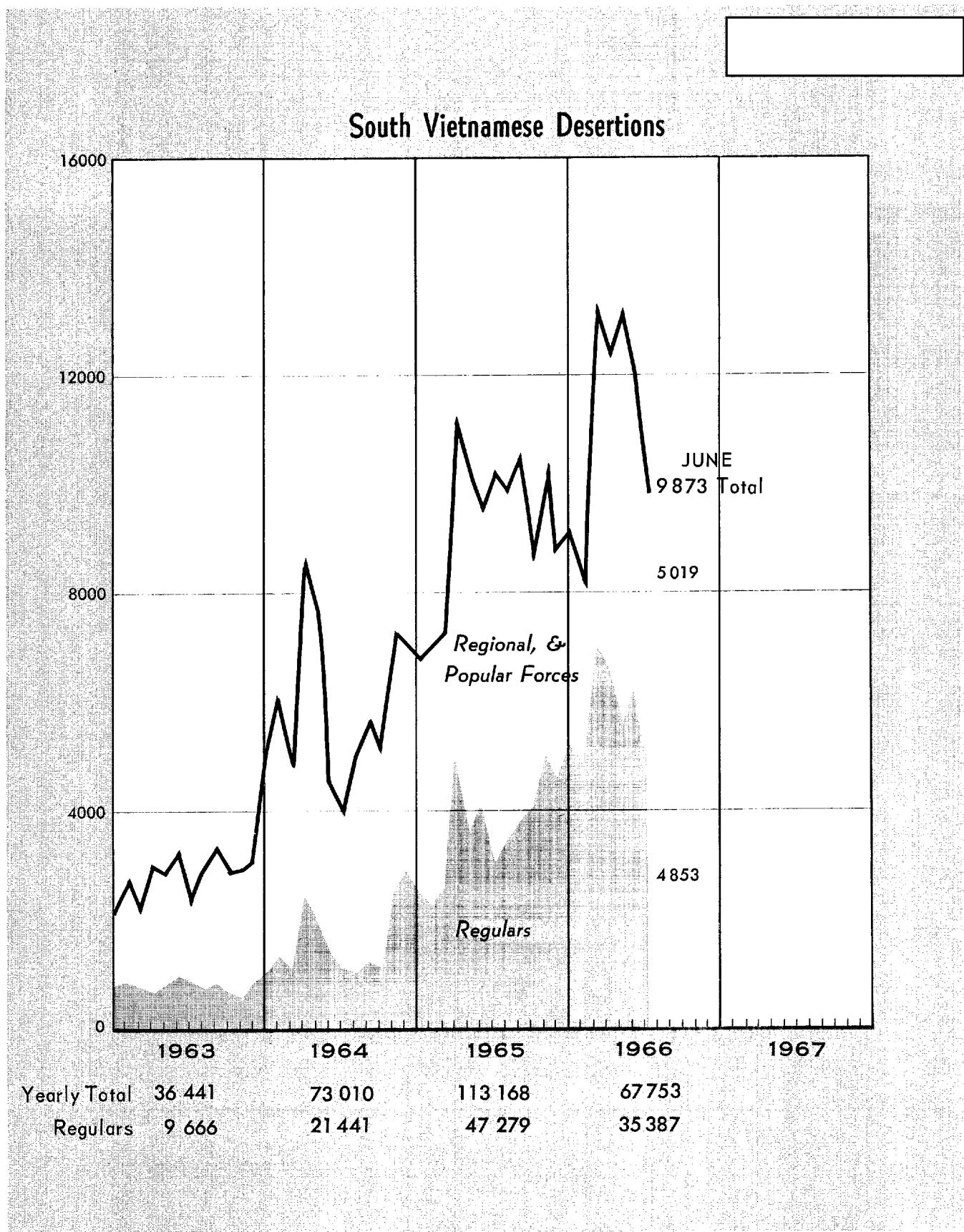
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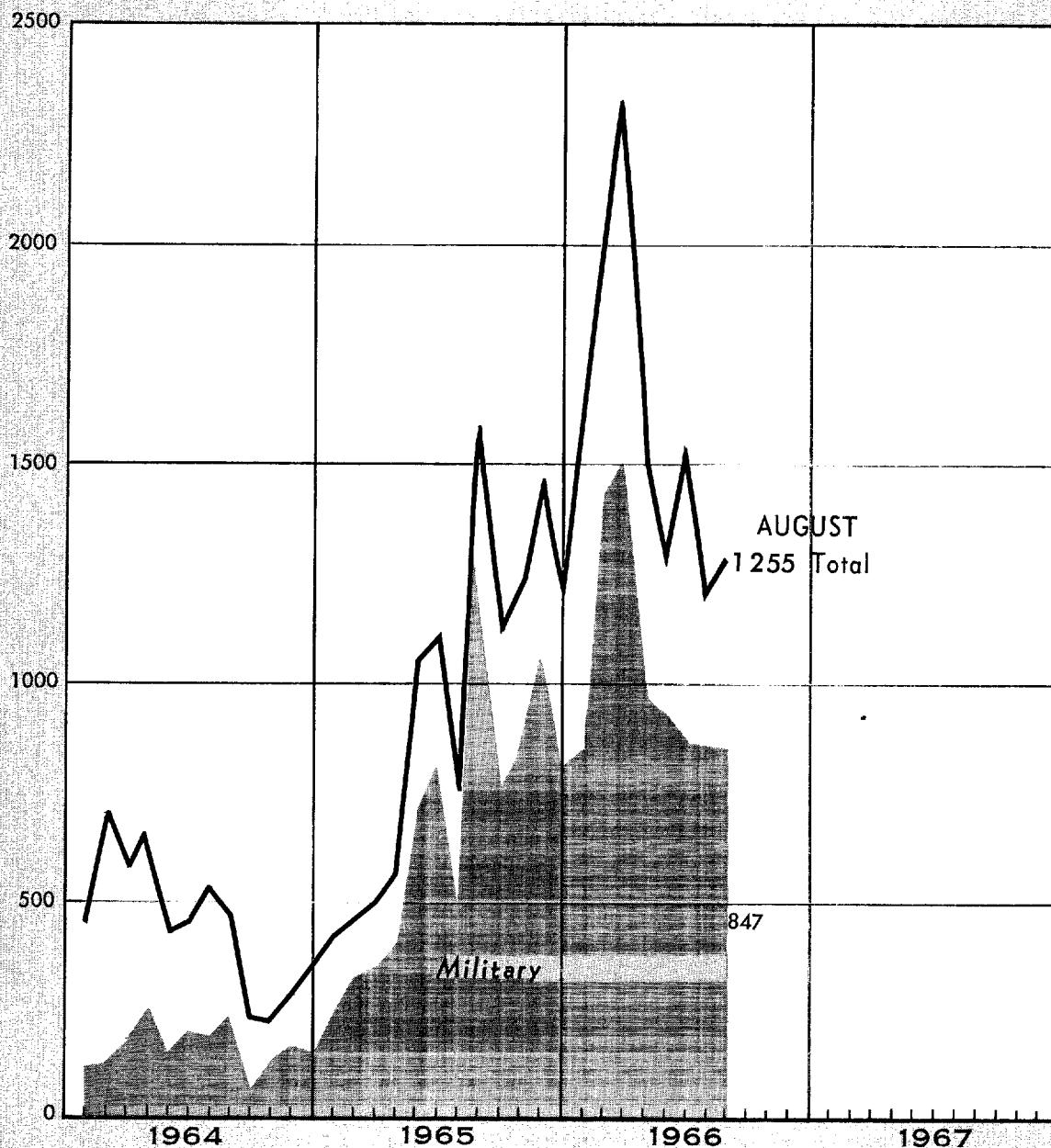
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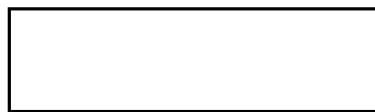
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Chieu Hoi Returnees



Yearly Total 5 417
Military 2 171

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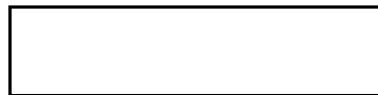
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South Vietnamese and Viet Cong Casualties and
Weapons Losses: 1962 - 31 August 1966

1. General Statistical Data:

Time Period	Viet Cong Incidents	Killed in Action		Wounded in Action		Captured or Missing		Total Casualties		Weapons Losses	
		GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC
Jan	1962	1825	299	1294	475	212	116	390	890	1896	- -
	1963	927	453	1754	908	318	102	379	1463	2451	457 683
	1964	1770	343	1223	913	-	555	240	1811	1463	917 532
	1965	2206	904	2203	1938	-	471	565	3313	2768	1700 711
	1966	3914	747	2648	1557	-	450	588	2754	3236	935 979
Feb	1962	1460	244	1205	300	316	124	353	668	1874	- -
	1963	788	379	1082	656	303	82	292	1117	1677	253 399
	1964	2078	374	1055	916	-	303	289	1593	1344	708 471
	1965	1982	880	1564	1840	-	1394	309	4114	1873	2454 620
	1966	3100	1015	4727	2095	-	477	508	3587	5235	1076 1219
Mar	1962	1961	523	1456	737	551	140	523	1400	2530	- -
	1963	1282	410	1443	851	368	66	222	1327	2033	467 367
	1964	2160	439	1456	1249	-	345	531	2033	1987	814 532
	1965	2056	751	2022	1633	-	720	394	3104	2416	1442 698
	1966	3670	938	5685	1961	-	466	604	3365	6289	1393 1632
Apr	1962	1933	387	1596	532	292	151	415	1070	2303	- -
	1963	1331	506	1660	878	256	96	388	1440	2304	797 468
	1964	2284	594	1671	1584	-	398	245	2576	1916	990 424
	1965	1860	591	1909	1650	-	232	529	2473	2438	757 973
	1966	3235	573	2818	1522	-	121	483	2216	3301	594 829
May	1962	1825	390	1756	509	352	94	524	993	2632	- -
	1963	1208	435	1895	889	295	94	695	1418	2885	463 564
	1964	2143	458	1135	987	-	202	242	1647	1377	723 281
	1965	2263	1049	1975	2143	-	873	548	4065	2523	1701 831
	1966	3566	661	4239	1454	-	196	652	2311	4891	493 1087
Jun	1962	1477	325	1666	613	413	77	441	1015	2520	- -
	1963	1311	389	1863	772	310	90	437	1251	2609	580 394
	1964	2062	494	1005	1145	-	313	230	1952	1235	718 387
	1965	2597	1211	2208	1920	-	1260	189	4391	2397	2387 793
	1966	3359	860	4815	1800	-	183	752	2843	5567	735 3761
Jul	1962	1564	384	1544	686	424	212	542	1282	2510	- -
	1963	1368	529	1918	1071	372	306	387	1906	2677	663 374
	1964	3045	900	1427	1812	-	510	219	3222	1646	1889 447
	1965	2520	1160	2980	1591	-	540	580	3425	3560	1375 882
	1966	2844	1592	5532	1800	-	196	444	3598	5976	744 1483

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Time Period	Viet Cong Incidents	Killed in Action		Wounded in Action		Captured or Missing		Total Casualties		Weapons Losses	
		GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC
Aug	1962	1642	377	2271	626	367	63	669	1066	3307	- -
	1963	1349	411	1685	804	237	352	482	1567	2404	637 428
	1964	2580	721	1449	1612	-	478	282	2811	1731	1106 619
	1965	2498	808	3624	1945	-	287	606	3040	4230	705 1074
	1966	2401	722	5857	1491	-	209	924	2422	6781	654 1298
Sep	1962	1375	419	2218	646	365	59	446	1124	3029	- -
	1963	1763	672	1982	1155	234	566	347	2393	2563	878 389
	1964	3091	819	1187	1759	-	737	230	3315	1417	1465 525
	1965	2473	655	3485	1724	-	266	838	2645	4323	778 838
Oct	1962	1357	365	1967	619	286	64	373	1048	2626	- -
	1963	1422	428	1520	989	244	398	236	1815	2000	753 330
	1964	2827	739	1617	1583	-	693	576	3015	2193	1510 482
	1965	3330	961	3874	2416	-	225	660	3602	4534	762 1013
Nov	1962	1311	410	1982	834	368	92	561	1336	2911	- -
	1963	3182	664	2333	1554	373	665	252	2883	2958	1595 455
	1964	1982	574	1747	1404	-	410	570	2388	2317	1104 515
	1965	3638	1034	5516	2056	-	520	592	3610	6108	1126 2164
Dec	1962	1346	294	2203	618	289	78	463	990	2955	- -
	1963	1921	389	1440	961	191	320	190	1670	1821	724 546
	1964	2504	1002	1813	2053	-	1092	503	4147	2316	2111 666
	1965	4106	1239	4076	2262	-	926	516	4427	4592	1728 1158

Composite Annual Totals

Time Period	VC Incidents	KIA		WIA		Captured or Missing		Total Casualties		Weapons Losses	
		GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC	GVN	VC
1962	19076	4417	21158	7195	4235	1270	5700	12882	31093	5195	4049*
1963	17852	5665	20575	11488	3501	3137	4307	20290	28383	8267	5397
1964	28526	7457	16785	17017	-	6036	4157	30510	20942	14055	5881
1965	31529	11243	35436	23118	-	7848	6326	42209	41762	16915	11755
**1966	26089	6376	36321	13518	-	2344	4955	22238	41276	6624	12288

*Monthly data unavailable for 1962 Weapons Losses.

**Through 31 August 1966

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2. Viet Cong Incidents: 1962 - 31 August 1966

Time Period	Viet Cong Incidents	ATTACKS			Total	Harassment & Terrorism	Sabotage	Propaganda	Anti-Aircraft
		Small-Scale	Co. Size	Bn. Size or Larger					
Jan	1962 1825	528	21	0	549	839	180	257	-
	1963 927	242	8	2	252	447	49	179	-
	1964 1770	218	2	3	223	1244	129	174	-
	1965 2206	57	5	1	63	1489	272	170	212
	1966 3914	42	23	5	70	2490	312	299	743
Feb	1962 1460	480	20	0	500	613	137	210	-
	1963 788	181	13	1	195	433	69	91	-
	1964 2078	211	3	3	217	1389	210	271	-
	1965 1982	73	6	3	82	1411	267	91	131
	1966 3100	50	10	9	69	1829	201	172	829
Mar	1962 1961	561	27	0	588	660	290	423	-
	1963 1282	333	11	0	344	653	131	154	-
	1964 2160	198	4	1	203	1632	158	167	-
	1965 2056	80	3	3	86	1476	240	90	164
	1966 3670	32	10	10	52	2332	212	154	920
Apr	1962 1933	470	27	0	497	1024	220	192	-
	1963 1331	371	9	3	383	688	105	155	-
	1964 2284	211	6	3	220	1738	169	157	-
	1965 1860	38	1	4	43	1407	149	96	165
	1966 3235	61	7	9	77	2238	252	110	513
May	1962 1825	490	28	0	528	892	154	251	-
	1963 1208	344	13	0	357	608	93	150	-
	1964 2143	170	3	2	175	418	217	140	193
	1965 2263	40	7	11	58	1558	365	115	170
	1966 3566	37	9	7	53	2552	295	106	560
Jun	1962 1477	339	23	0	362	736	157	222	-
	1963 1311	398	11	1	410	652	107	142	-
	1964 2062	128	10	2	140	1390	176	162	194
	1965 2597	62	1	6	69	1784	469	103	172
	1966 3359	47	10	11	68	2382	211	110	588

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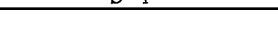


Time Period	Viet Cong Incidents	A T T A C K S			Harassment & Terrorism	Sabotage	Propaganda	Anti-Aircraft
		Small-Scale	Co. Size	Bn. Size and Larger				
Jul	1962 1564	437	10	1	448	735	158	223
	1963 1368	398	8	1	407	698	80	183
	1964 3045	166	12	7	185	2132	286	224
	1965 2520	42	0	6	48	1706	400	154
	1966 2844	91	0	0	91	1906	200	561
Aug	1962 1642	368	10	0	378	885	146	233
	1963 1349	356	11	1	368	647	113	221
	1964 2580	107	3	3	113	1775	315	173
	1965 2498	38	9	5	52	1597	349	200
	1966 2401	59	10	5	74	1752	113	385
Sep	1962 1375	382	9	0	391	624	178	182
	1963 1763	483	17	3	503	889	164	207
	1964 3091	110	4	4	118	1938	482	178
	1965 2473	19	7	5	31	1530	278	449
	1962 1357	406	12	1	419	583	189	166
Oct	1963 1422	359	6	0	365	802	105	150
	1964 2827	75	2	6	83	1790	480	197
	1965 3330	24	8	12	44	1969	415	704
	1962 1311	411	7	3	421	614	144	132
Nov	1963 3182	631	11	3	645	1990	269	278
	1964 1982	57	2	1	60	1391	247	109
	1965 3638	26	16	10	52	2234	486	611
	1962 1346	375	8	1	384	670	107	185
Dec	1963 1921	258	3	0	261	1298	111	251
	1964 2504	81	9	6	96	1719	318	128
	1965 4106	32	18	7	57	2572	442	718

Composite Annual Totals

1962	19076	5247	212	6	5465	8875	2060	2676	No Data
1963	17852	4354	121	15	4490	9805	1396	2161	No Data
1964	28526	1732	60	41	1833	19556	3178	2080	1879
1965	31529	531	81	73	685	20730	4132	1974	4008
*1966	26089	419	61	74	544	17526	1796	1124	5099

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